



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

April 12, 2023

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-81
FY23 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS)
General Personnel and Operating Costs

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that the potential racial equity and social justice impacts of Supplemental Appropriation #23-81 – FY23 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service General Personnel and Operating Costs – are inconclusive. As was previously noted in the [REIA for Supplemental Appropriation #22-62 MCFRS End of Year Supplemental](#) – which addressed a similar funding request for the FY22 Operating Budget – the limited information accompanying the supplemental request hindered ORESJ’s ability to confidently assess any racial equity impacts, be they of benefit or burden, to County residents and the MCFRS workforce. In order to address equity impacts moving forward, ORESJ recommends that MCFRS consider the following:
- whether services and resources provided under this appropriation are equitably distributed and/or address a racial disparity; and
 - the demographics of the workers receiving overtime payments compared to the demographics of the MCFRS workforce.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-81 – FY23 Operating Budget, MCFRS General Personnel and Operating Costs – is to support general personnel and operating expenditures in the amount of \$10,449,635 through the end of the year as actual expenses are expected to exceed the current FY23 budget. Specifically, personnel

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costs are projected to exceed the current appropriation due to actual overtime costs being greater than budgeted while operating expenses are also projected to exceed the current appropriation, primarily due to insurance premium increases, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) distributions, Automated External Defibrillator (AED) replacements, and Fire and Rescue Occupational Medical Services (FROMS) Contract increases.

As previously stated, in order to assess the extent to which a supplemental request such as this advances racial equity and social justice in the County, ORESJ would examine whether services and resources under this appropriation are equitably distributed and/or address a racial disparity; and the demographics of the workers receiving overtime payments compared to the demographics of the MCFRS workforce. At the time of this analysis, information regarding beneficiaries of service delivery and workforce data were not available for such an analysis. Of note, Information accompanying this request states that this supplemental does not explicitly seek to address racial inequities in the County and thusly does not identify any.

Regarding service delivery and resource distribution, it is implied that based on call (incident) load, busier fire stations serve a greater proportion of communities identified as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) and are thusly primary beneficiaries of FRS services and resources. It is then suggested that these communities would be disproportionately harmed should this funding request not be appropriated. As previously stated in the [REIA for Supplemental Appropriation \(SA\) #23-57 – Amendment to the FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program for Apparatus Replacement Program](#) – “the absence of data makes it difficult to assess the validity of this claim in addition to a lack of transparency regarding the full methodology regarding policies or processes used to determine resource distribution”. As such, ORESJ recommends the intentional application of a racial equity lens in order to ensure that BIPOC communities are equitably served by MCFRS. This is especially prudent as additional information accompanying this funding request suggests that unallocated FY23 ESPP funds may be used to support a portion of this supplemental appropriation.

As noted in the [REIA for Supplemental Appropriation #22-90 FY22 Operating Budget MCFRS for ESPP](#), stipulations for supplemental payments provided by ESPP require that providers receiving these funds be enrolled as a Medicaid provider for the period being claimed on their annual cost report; provide ground Emergency Transport Services to Medicaid recipients; and be a “Jurisdictional Emergency Medical Services Operational Program. Considering that Medicaid recipients in Montgomery County are primarily low-income BIPOC residents, any ESPP funding utilized for the purposes of this supplemental request should be prioritized to benefit those outlined by the funding requirements and not simply to address MCFRS administrative costs such as overtime payments.

As it relates to overtime expenses, again, it is important to apply a racial equity lens to the

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policies used to determine overtime eligibility and utilization—examining the demographics of the workers receiving overtime payments compared to the demographics of the MCFRS workforce as a whole. As the [REIA for Supplemental Appropriation #22-62 MCFRS End of Year Supplemental](#) states, “Both types of analyses—demographic and policy—are useful for determining whether this supplemental appropriation is likely to advance racial equity and social justice, as racial equity is both a process and an outcome¹”.

cc: Scott Goldstein, Chief, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services
Ken Hartman, Director, Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive

¹ Race Forward. *What is Racial Equity?* Available at: <https://www.raceforward.org/about/what-is-racial-equity>